



Come. Follow. Me.
Jesus's Invitation of Life
#6 - Follow My Commands (John 15:1-17)

"If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you."
- John 15:10-12 (New International Version)

Jesus keeps it simple.

1. Does Jesus love us conditionally or unconditionally?
 - a. Jesus powerfully taught God the Father's _____ love for His human creation. He loves those who don't love Him (1 John 4:10). His love extends to His enemies, which we are because of being steeped in sin (sin is rebellion against his rule - Romans 5:10; Colossians 1:21). This love is a key element in His quality of being "perfect."

"But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect." - Matthew 5:44-48 (NIV)

- b. God loves us because we are His _____ creation. Humans alone bear the image of God within the created order (Genesis 1:27). We have intrinsic value from this status with God.

"Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows." - Matthew 10:29-31 (NIV)

- c. Humans are the _____ of God's love (Romans 5:8).

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." - John 3:16 (NIV)

2. So why does Jesus tell us we will "remain in my love" if we "keep my commands"? If we disobey, are we "outside" His love?
 - a. First, Jesus _____ His own remaining in the Father's love with His obedience to the Father's commands for Him. Jesus's perfect submission in aligning His will with the will of the Father is what made Him the perfect, sinless sacrifice for our sin (Matthew 26:39; Hebrews 10:1-10).
 - b. For Jesus, God the Father's love is so compelling and fulfilling that nothing outside of it is a worthy _____. To "remain" means to dwell, live, abide, stay.

- c. Our weakness, even with the new birth and regeneration of our spirit by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:4-7), makes "remaining" and "obeying" _____ of the time challenging.
 - d. Since God's love is already given, it is not earned or received as a reward when we obey or removed when we disobey. We remain by constantly _____.
3. The teachings Jesus gives us to apply are many, but He only imposes on His disciples one *command*. By the way, Jesus's teachings most often are the _____ by which to obey the command!

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." - John 13:34-35 (English Standard Version)

4. It is so important to remember that His commands are not impossible or burdensome. In fact, obedience yields _____.

"This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith." - 1 John 5:2-4 (NIV)

Simple doesn't mean easy.

1. Two questions arise from this topic, and both have the same answer.
 - a. How exactly does joy come from obedience?
 - b. How can we obey the command to love one another as Jesus loves us?
2. The answer: Stay _____ to Jesus. We cannot generate joy or obedience. Both result from dwelling with Jesus. This is what Jesus means in the analogy of being the vine that gives the branches what is needed to bear fruit. Apart from Him we "*can do nothing*" (v. 5).
3. Jesus's joy from His own faithfulness is passed on to us when we are faithful ("*my joy*" in v. 11). This is the "_____" that comes from being friends with Jesus (vv. 14-15).
4. Jesus's love is how we are to love others.
 - a. The love with which He loves us comes from the Father (v. 9).
 - b. To "*lay down one's life*" means to set aside privilege, pride, prerogative, possessions, pleasures, paychecks, _____ (?).

"This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth."
- 1 John 3:16-18 (NIV)